

February 28, 2007

The Spire

The Newsletter of the First Parish Church of Norwell, Massachusetts

781-659-7122

February 28, 2007

Vol. V Issue 13

Sunday Services – 10 a.m.

March 4

Rev. Victoria Weinstein

“March Forth!”

It is our Stewardship Sunday, and I couldn't resist using the date as a pun, and as an imperative. We are in an era of high energy and broad and excited participation in our church. Did you know that this is so unusually in American liberal Protestant churches today as to be downright rare? Join us in the spirit of celebration and commitment, and don't forget to attend the Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off Dinner on March 3 to feast on Jim Miller's fantastic food and to share some undoubtedly hilarious karaoke-induced memories.

Ushers: Cathy Harder-Bernier & Les Taylor

Pulpit Arrangement: The Phillips Family **Chalice Lighter:** Barb Meacham

Coffee Hour: Jack Wallace and Linda & George Goodwin

March 11

Lisa Messersmith, Rev. Victoria Weinstein

“Children Will Listen”

We are handing the next generation an awfully big plate of responsibilities: not just to find a meaningful personal path but to actually save the world, not in a vague way but in the context of urgent environmental crisis. How will we equip them to be bearers of vision, cultivators of strength and holders of hope as they grow into maturity? Our Second Sunday offering today goes to support research and care for pediatric HIV-AIDS patients through the Clinton Foundation. Lisa Messersmith will speak to us about her work in the field of AIDS treatment in developing countries, bringing a message of hope and possibility for children with HIV.

Ushers: Colin and Marianne Schofield **Chalice Lighter:** open

Pulpit Arrangement: Frank and Libet Callahan

Coffee Hour: Phyllis Buell and Frank & Libet Callahan

March 18 **Union Sunday - 10:30 AM (note time change)**

It is our turn to host the annual Union Service, where we will host ministers and parishioners from Hingham Second Parish, Hingham Old Ship Church, Cohasset First Parish, Scituate First Parish, and Assinippi Universalist Church. Join us for a beautiful service on Peace-Making, followed by a conversation in the Fogg Parlor.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH

of Norwell, Massachusetts
24 River Street, P.O. Box 152
Norwell, MA 02061

Office Hours: 9-Noon, M&F
9-1, T,W, Th

PHONE: 781-659-7122

FAX: 781-659-7939

E-MAIL:

office@firstparishnorwell.org

HOME PAGE:

www.firstparishnorwell.org

Minister: *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

In an emergency, call the Parsonage:
781-659-7288

Director of Religious Education:

Stuart Twite, 781-837-8791

Director of Youth Programming

Jennifer Anderson 617-763-2799

Music Director: *Gingy Grimes*

Parish Committee:

Chris Silva, Chair

(Home) 781-871-6819

Committee Members:

David Dube, John Meddaugh,

Jim Pickel, Cathy Phillips,

Sally Turner and Derek Sulc

Treasurer: *Marta Reese*

Collector: *Jeannette Mitchell*

Minister Emeritus:

Richard M. Fewkes

The deadline for the next issue of THE SPIRE is **Sunday, March 13th**. Submissions may be emailed as an attachment to: office@firstparishnorwell.org, or dropped off in hard copy or disk at the church office.

In the Spirit*Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

Thank you, Church, for being such good and supportive people during the recent media attention for my work as “image consultant to the American clergy.” How did it fall to one ordinary small-town New England pastor to start a national conversation on this issue? It happened like this: I cared about it, I started writing about it in a way that I knew would both provoke and entertain my colleagues of all denominations, and lo, the reporters came knocking. I think the reason they came knocking is that folks are still laboring under the misapprehension that ministers and priests are somehow *in* the world but not *of* the world, which is sheer nonsense. If anything, we should be as deeply in the world **and** of the world as we can possibly manage. While my on-line writing persona intentionally verges on outrageous, my consultation with seminarians and clergy is quite serious and directly relates to my teaching of worship and liturgy, and my commitment to communicating to the world that liberal religion is vibrant, relevant, and a force for good in the life of the individual and the world.

As we kick off our annual Stewardship Campaign at First Parish with a special dinner this coming Saturday, I hope you will consider how relevant and vibrant a force the church is in your life, and in the life of your family. How much do you cherish the existence of an institution that affirms and promotes community, acceptance, diversity, free inquiry, and an ethic of love and reverence? I hope the answer is *very much*, as it is for me. The Finance Committee has asked us all to consider us all to increase our pledges by \$250. I will certainly increase my own pledge by at least that much, and I’m going to check with our Collector, Jeannette Mitchell, to make sure that I’m fully paid up on my 2006 pledge. How can a minister be unsure of this? Because I, like many of you, am not the most organized person in the world, and because our fiscal year as a church goes from July to July, not from January to January. I admit it! I’m not sure! I’m not afraid to ask, and neither should you be. We are covenanted in love, not in perfection. Ain’t that good news?

In faith, hope and love,
Vicki

Meetings...

Activities Committee, Sun., March 4, 11:30 a.m.

in the Fogg Parlor

Alliance Board, Wed., March 7, 10 a.m. in the

Fogg Parlor

Alliance Meeting, Wed., March 21, 10 a.m. in the

Parish Hall

Capital Improvement Comm., Sun., March 11,

11:30 a.m. in the Skylight Room

Caregivers' Group, Tues., March 27, 7:30 p.m. in

the Fogg Parlor

Finance Committee, Tues., March 13, 7:15 p.m.

in the Fogg Parlor

Music Committee, Sun., March 4, 11:45 in the

Skylight Room

Parish Committee, Tues., March 20, 7:00 p.m. in

the Fogg Parlor

Service Committee, Sun., March 11, 11:30 a.m.

in the Church Office

Women's Group, Mon., March 5, 7:30 p.m. in the

Fogg Parlor

UU History and Heritage with Rev. Victoria Weinstein March 11, 2007 11:45-1:15

This is the second part of our "Path to Membership" series and introduces new friends and members to the theological heritage of Unitarian Universalism.

Bring your questions, and please let us know if you need childcare.

MUSICIANS WANTED

The Music Committee invites anyone in the congregation who is interested in participating in Music Sunday to share their musical talents with us on Sunday, May 13. We encourage vocalists and instrumentalists to join us in celebration of music for this special service. Please contact either Giny Grimes or Marie Miller, if you wish to participate.

Auction Donations Needed Now!!!!

We will print the list in the mid-March newsletter. Peg Kitchenham has forms with her at coffee hour or you can call her (781-447-5831) or drop them off in the office.

What to give? How about your cooking skills, a home made craft or art work, a boat trip, golf outing, use of your canoe, baby care, use of a condo or cottage.

Donated so far:

8 weeks of ballroom dancing,

A 7 course dinner at the Pickel's

Pet sitting and portrait by Elizabeth Robinson

Walden Picnic & History by Rev. Vicki.

This is a super fun evening. We supply dessert, wine and coffee. We also invite you to bring a close friend to the Auction if you like. Extra bidders make for more fun, (and more money) but it is not open to the general public. Absentee bids are also accepted.

See you Sat., March 24!

Green Hygiene?

Check out the Environmental Committee bulletin board for an in-depth look at what's good and what's bad inside your shampoo, soap, makeup, hair coloring, deodorant and other personal care products.

In the meantime, here are some more Green Saving Tips: Save 5 pounds of CO2 for every ream of 100% post-consumer **recycled computer paper** you use. Save yourself sick days by buying an **indoor plant** - it increases air quality in winter months when you can't open windows. (Plants make great gifts too!) And last but not least the ever-famous throw on your sweaters and **turn down your thermostat** - even just a few degrees can yield an annual CO2 reduction of 1400 pounds.

Fogg Ad Hoc Connection

This is the first in a series of articles to keep you informed about the Fogg Trust final distribution. The following Q & A is intended to provide background information, introduce the new, 3 year, Fogg Ad Hoc Committee, and give an update of their activities to date:

What is the Fogg Trust?

Helen Fogg established the Fogg Family Trust January 5, 1979, as a vehicle to facilitate the Fogg family's charitable interests. She amended the trust December 27, 1983 naming First Parish Norwell and New England Baptist Hospital as equal beneficiaries. The trust was funded following her death April 18, 1984.

Horace, Helen's father, was a co-founder of Independent Bank Corporation, known locally as Rockland Trust Company. Helen was a long time employee and benefactor of the UU Service Committee and a strong believer in helping others. The family also had a long time interest in the welfare of First Parish Church.

How does the trust work?

The Fogg Family Trust is a 25-year, "net income" trust. The trust represents a variety of investments in equities, fixed income securities and cash equivalents, and is managed by Burns & Levinson. By law, the trust is required to average the balances from the previous trust year and then distribute 5% of that figure to the beneficiaries.

First Parish will receive 50% of the remaining corpus of the trust in April, 2009. The terminating distribution to be made to the church is required *"to be held as a permanent fund to be known as 'The Horace T. Fogg, Isabella F. Fogg, Faulkner Fogg and Helen L. Fogg Fund' and is to be used for the Church's religious and charitable purposes."*

What will happen with the Fogg Trust terminating distribution?

As of June 30, 2006, the Fogg Family Trust was valued \$5,497,162 of which \$2,748,581 is First Parish's portion. With the terminating distribution in April 2009, these funds will be owned by the church, and as a church asset become our fiduciary responsibility.

In FY06, the Parish Committee appointed Tom Anderson, Jack Christensen and Deanna Riley to the Fogg Trust Ad Hoc Committee. This committee was appointed to serve from 7/1/06 to 6/30/09, *"for the purpose of repositioning Fogg Trust assets from Burns and Levinson to First Parish Church"*.

What is the Fogg Ad Hoc doing?

Our focus in this start-up year has been on gathering information. We began by acquiring and reviewing source documents, including, Helen's Will and First Codicil, her original and amended Trust, our church Bylaws, the South Scituate First Parish Fund Corporation (SSFC) references, and other relevant materials. In late January, we engaged a trust attorney to guide us on interpretation of the Trust, changes in law and/or practice in recent years, and options available to the church. We expect to receive a report of her findings and recommendations in the next few weeks.

Currently, we have scheduled meetings with the church's financial committees—Finance, Fogg, and South Scituate Fund Corp. We plan to explore challenges and/or opportunities the terminating distribution represents. We will also discuss the church's current investment philosophy and practices, as well as, options for Fogg Fund structure, fund oversight, and investment guidelines.

Findings from the attorney's report and our financial committee's input will be shared with the Parish Committee in mid-April. You can look for another article in the Spire at that time which will also have our plans and next

steps for FY08. Next year we do plan to schedule congregational conversations to present key decision points and get the “view from the pew”. You don’t have to wait till then however. If you have thoughts or suggestions to share, or questions to ask, just let us know. You can catch us (Jack, Tom, Deanna) on a Sunday at coffee hour, leave a note in our mailbox in the church office, or email us at the church (office@firstparishnorwell.org) by putting FOGG AD HOC in the subject line.

SERVICE COMMITTEE

*“...to minister to each others needs
and to those of humanity...”*

At the end of 2006, 2.3 million children were living with HIV around the world.

Over half a million children became newly infected with HIV in 2006.

Of the 2.9 million people who died of AIDS last year, over one in ten were children. Every hour, forty children die as a result of AIDS.¹

The global statistics on illness and deaths due to AIDS among children are alarming. But there is hope. With access to affordable antiretroviral therapy (ART), most children born today who are HIV positive can expect to live healthy lives with normal life spans. Without these drugs, however, they will not likely survive past childhood. Due to the prohibitive pricing of pediatric medications and the additional complexity of administering antiretroviral (ARV) therapy, only one in ten children who need ART is actually getting it.

The Clinton Foundation has made tremendous strides in ensuring that people around the world have access to these life saving medicines. The Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative (CHAI) strives to make treatment for HIV/AIDS

more affordable and to implement large-scale integrated care, treatment, and prevention programs. Since its inception, CHAI has helped bring AIDS care and treatment to over 415,000 people living with HIV/AIDS around the world.

An example of the Clinton’s outreach efforts is at the Maryknoll Orphanage in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Since establishing its presence in Cambodia in June 2005, CHAI has greatly increased the number of children accessing antiretroviral therapy in the country. Through CHAI’s assistance, the number of children on treatment in Cambodia has increased from 400 to more than 1,200 just within the past year. CHAI’s donation of pediatric formulations to the Cambodian government has secured Maryknoll’s supply of ARV drugs for the future, allowing it to focus its resources on social support services and on improving the lives of orphans and vulnerable children.

We must work together to turn the tide of HIV/AIDS, or it will be impossible for many countries in the developing world to achieve their social and economic development goals. And the future of our global community will be at risk. Through your generous donations, the Clinton Foundation can continue to turn the tide of the AIDS pandemic and bring quality healthcare to the world’s children and those in rural areas.

The Service Committee has chosen Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative (<http://www.clintonfoundation.org>) as our March outreach focus.

On March 11th (Second Sunday) we will contribute our open plate offering to this outreach. Additional contributions to our outreach can be made directly to the church office, checks made out to First Parish and marked for Outreach.

¹UNAIDS Epidemic Update. December 2006.

*****DONATIONS REQUESTED FOR FIRE RELIEF EFFORT*****

Recently, the Holston Valley UU Church in Gray, Tennessee, lost their entire Religious Education building in a fire. Because all classroom supplies were totally destroyed as well, they are desperately in need of replacement craft materials (such as paint, scissors, glue, clay, and colored pencils) for use in their Sunday school classes.

We can help! FPN's youth group, The Experience, will be accepting NEW, UNOPENED classroom items (or monetary donations, if preferred) in the parish hall until Sunday, March 18.

Questions? Please call Jen Anderson at 617-763-2799 or find Jen McCann, project coordinator, at coffee hour.

Help Needed

The Service Committee has recently been informed about a need within our community to provide kitchen items for families that are in transition and living in motel-like housing. Through the Norwell Food Pantry, these items will be distributed to aid families in food preparation and clean up. A basket will be provided at the Service Committee table for any of the following **NEW** items: manual can opener, measuring spoons, measuring cups, skillet/frying pan, soup/pasta pot, mixing bowl, colander, cookie/pizza pan, oven mitts, kitchen towels, spatula, mixing spoon, paring knife, flatware, dishes, glasses, laundry basket, bath/hand towels, wash cloths. Your donation can be made at anytime and items will be distributed as we receive them.

Coffee hour hosts are needed for March, April, May and June. Please sign up using the coffee hour sign up sheet located in the parish hall. Please call Joanne McCann @781-829-6833 or Libet Callahan @781-659-2485 if you have any questions or need additional information regarding coffee hour.

Fogg Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

The Fogg Scholarship Committee will be accepting applications from graduating seniors who will be attending accredited post secondary educational institutions (including trade schools) that lead to a diploma, certification or license.

The Helen Fogg Scholarship is awarded to graduating seniors whose parents or legal guardians are members of First Parish Norwell and who have clearly demonstrated the ideals of Helen Fogg by serving their church and community. All interested parties may pick up scholarship application at the church office beginning February 1. Completed applications must be returned to the church office by May 1, 2007. All recipients will be recognized at the Children's service in June.

Last year recipients of the Helen Fogg Scholarship included:

Molly Reese
Sarah Pritchard
Arline Litchfield

If you have any questions regarding the Fogg Scholarships, please contact Frank Callahan or Bernie Gardner.

Religious Education at First Parish

From the DRE,

As I write, we are one week into the Lenten season and though I am aware that Lent is not the most observed time for most Unitarian Universalists, it could be. Often associated with grim self-denial, sackcloth and ashes, Lent is, in reality, a time of self-examination, reflection and preparation. The observance goes back to the life of Jesus. After being baptized by John, Jesus is led by the Spirit to the wilderness where he fasts for 40 days and is subjected to temptations from Satan who promises him wealth and power if he (Jesus) will subject himself to him. Jesus rebukes the devil and his public ministry is launched.

On the surface this story may seem to have little relevance to our daily practical and spiritual struggles. I would, however, argue the contrary. It is, indeed the story of much of our lives. We are, I believe, all born with a (to use a Gnostic term) spark of Divinity in us; a knowledge and a hankering for a deeper and more integrated life. This spark is, however, profoundly dimmed by the realities large and small of daily living. We can, however, choose to seek, and then fan that spark into a fire. When we make this choice we are baptized into a new way of looking at our lives and the world—we start down a new path. And yet, the realities, large and small of daily living still threaten to extinguish the spark and that is where Lent comes in.

Jesus fasted for 40 days and dealt with his devil (or devils) and while we may not go into a geographical wilderness, we need to do the same. No matter your particular path, whether theistic or not; "religious" or not; the spark needs be protected in order to provide light and warmth. Lent is a time to examine ourselves, start working on things that hinder our walk along the way, and prepare for a new, higher, nobler life.

So I urge everyone to take some time to contemplate Lent this year (you still have 30 some days to go). Instead of giving something up, consider adopting a spiritual practice. Towards that end, I will be featuring one or another practice from various traditions at the RE table each Sunday during lent. Stop by and see if something strikes you...and Happen Lenten season!

Many blessings, stuart

Thank you everyone for your thoughts and prayers for my Mother, Aunt, and Godson. Your support means much to me and your prayers mean much to them. I visited in South Dakota last week and had a wonderful time. Thanks again to all.

We welcome all new members of all ages. It gives us great joy that you are here! If you have any questions about our programs, please don't hesitate to call or email me at:
Stuart Twite: H-781 837 8791, Church-781 659-7122, or DREStuart@aol.com

Adult Learning News

One spiritual practice (see From the DRE) that you could take up during Lent is to attend one or more of our adult learning offerings. Here is what is coming up!

Our First Parish Bible Study, A Panorama of Life, continues on Sunday, March 4th with the study of the book of Romans. This is the big one! If you want to understand Paul or Christianity, Romans cannot be missed. It is, arguably, the most important letter in the Bible. Give it a read and join us on Sunday morning at 9:00am in the Fogg Parlor. Call or email stuart twite if you have questions or need a Bible!

The First Parish Book Group will read Snow by Orhan Pamuk, on Wednesday, March 14th at 7:00pm in the Fogg Parlor. Don't miss this book!

□ If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, check here and drop in the mail. No postage is required.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
STANDARD MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NORWELL, MA
PERMIT NO. 2

FIRST PARISH UNITARIAN
24 River Street – P.O. Box 152
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061

THE SPIRE

**TIME-RELATED MATERIAL
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

RSVP for the 2007 Stewardship Dinner!

The 2007 Stewardship Dinner will be held this **Saturday, March 3rd** at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. **RSVP** by calling the church office at 781-659-7122.

Join us for a delicious dinner, and learn about the goals for this year's stewardship campaign. Our theme this year focuses on fellowship, family and fun. Childcare will be provided and don't miss "Canvass Karaoke"!

James Library & Center for the Arts

In the Art Gallery

Chuck Lathrop. Opening reception, Friday, March 2 at 7 p.m. Free as always.

Folk and Jazz Concert

Celtic & Crossover

Sunday, March 11 at 3 p.m.

A group of Boston Symphony Orchestra members and friends let down their hair and in the words of the group's leader, violinist Bonnie Bewick, " We will step out of our perfectionist roles and crank out some tunes! Join us and clap and shout as the mood moves you."

So Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a twist - a major twist! Latin jazz tangos, a tribute to Django Reinhardt and Celtic dance tunes. Tickets are available now by calling the James (659-7100) and at the door. Remember that a pair of complimentary tickets for church members are available in the office.

Third Thursday Poetry Night

Thursday, March 15 at 7 p.m.

Join Stuart Twite and other poetry lovers. Bring a poem, have a cup of coffee, or just come and listen.